



**South Dakota Department  
of Transportation**

# **U.S. Highway 85 Roadway Design Public Meeting Open House**

Project Location: Wyoming state line to U.S. Highway 14A (Cheyenne Crossing)

Project Number: NH 0085(106)0 PCN06J8

Date: Thursday, June 4, 2026

# Introductions

## Project Team

Todd Seaman – SDDOT

Mark Malone – SDDOT

Steve Palmer – SDDOT

Mike Carlson – SDDOT

FHU – Design Consultant

# Roadway History

## Grading

1950, 1953, 1966




## Resurfaced


1954, 1981, 1994, 2006, 2010

## Structure repairs

1982, 2002

# Project History

<p>Black Hills Context Sensitive Corridor Study identifies U.S. 85 as a focus corridor. Safety concerns identified due to high crash rates.</p>	<p>Study Advisory Team evaluates improvements needed for corridor.</p>	<p>Project website live and first public meeting held. Scoping meeting.</p>	<p>Preliminary design completed. Stakeholder meetings and public meeting held. Design changes from public input considered.</p>	<p>Roadway Design Stakeholder Group meetings.</p>
<p> <b>2018</b></p>	<p><b>2020</b></p>	<p> <b>2021</b></p>	<p> <b>2023</b></p>	<p><b>2025</b></p>
<p><b>2026</b></p>		<p>Final Roadway Design Stakeholder Group Meeting Public Meeting</p>		
<p><b>2026</b></p>	<p><b>2027</b></p>	<p><b>2028</b></p>	<p><b>2030/2031</b></p>	
<p>Landowner Meetings</p>	<p>Final design inspection.</p>	<p>ROW acquisition.</p>	<p>Construction begins.</p>	

 Public Input Received



# Landowner Meetings

Driveway locations/widths

Sidewalk and curb ramps

Fences

Drainage

Trees

Temporary easements or ROW acquisition

# Stakeholder Focus Group

Represent varied interests along the project corridor

Identify and consider varied priorities of stakeholders and impacted residents

Provide input on proposed road design



- ✓ Engaged in design process
- ✓ Provided information to share with neighbors/networks

# Stakeholder Organizations

Adjacent Landowners

Black Hills Badland Tourism Association

Cheyenne Crossing

Eagle Cliff Ski Association

Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe

Lawrence County Commission

Lawrence County Highway Department

Lawrence County Sheriffs Department

Lead Chamber of Commerce

Lead-Deadwood School District

Lead Volunteer Fire Department

Local Residents

Rochford Volunteer Fire Department

S.D. Department of Tourism

S.D. Game, Fish, and Parks

S.D. Highway Patrol

S.D. Trucking Association

Spearfish Canyon Fire Department

Spearfish Canyon Fly Fisherman

Spearfish Canyon Owners Association

Thunderhead Episcopal Church Camp

Trailhead Lodge

U.S. Forest Service

Wickiup Cabins

# Stakeholder Group Timeline

*September 2025: Introductory Meetings*

**November 2025:** Reconvene with updated design and additional information

**April 2026:** Final stakeholder meeting

**Today:** Preliminary Design Public Meeting

**TBD:** Assemble Construction Phasing Focus Group



# Construction Traffic Goals

- **Separate Stakeholder Group to consider**
  - Sequencing/Phasing
  - Rally Work
  - Winter Work
  - Other?
- **Expecting two-way traffic at night**
  - Exceptions may be in canyon areas for retaining wall work, then maintain night traffic with signals
- **Expecting flagger/pilot car or signals during working hours**
- **Delays TBD**



# Safety Data

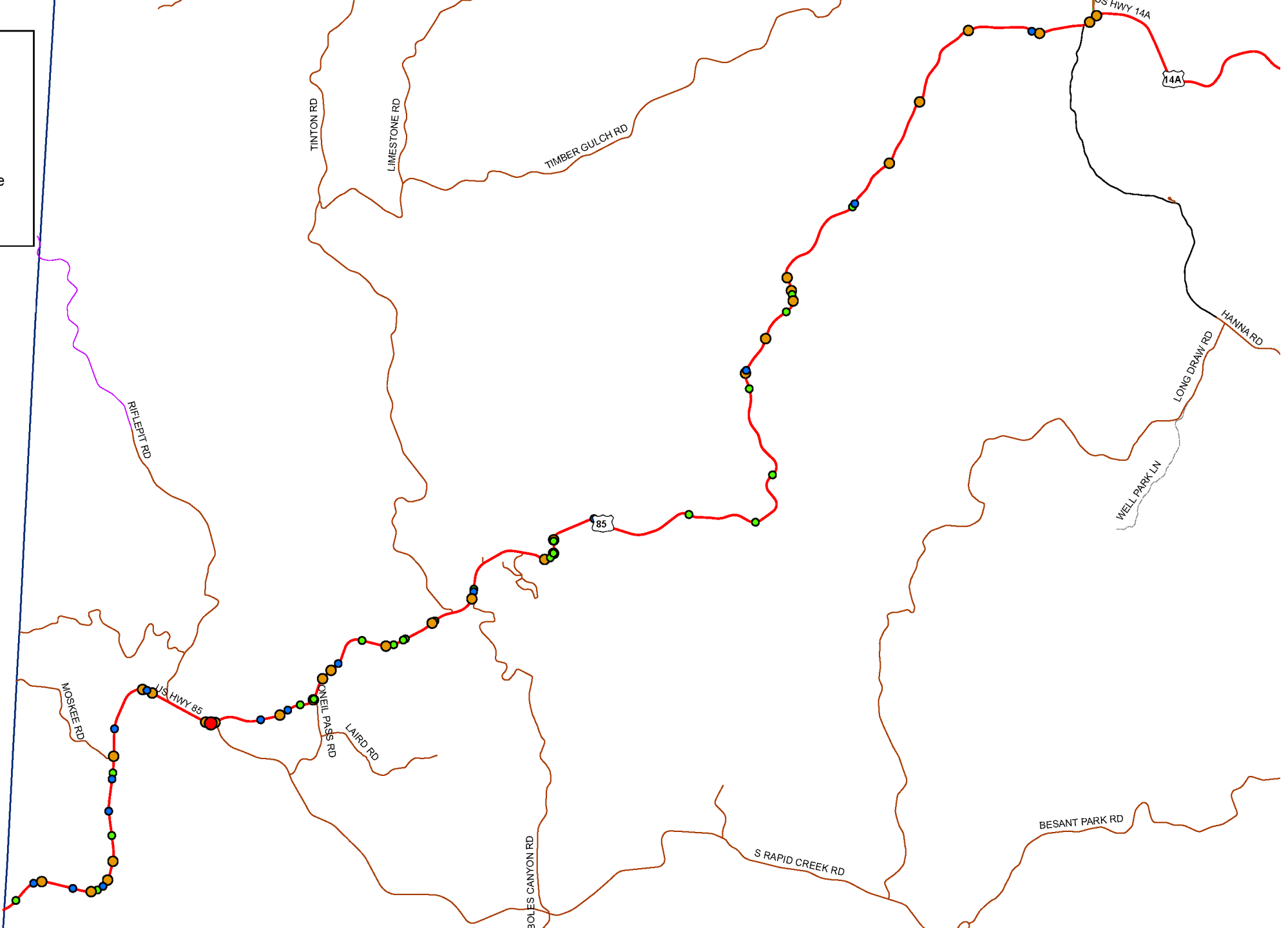


# Crashes 2020

**Crashes  
2020-2024**

- Fatal
- Injury
- Property Damage
- Animal

- Fatal
- Injury
- Property Damage
- Animal



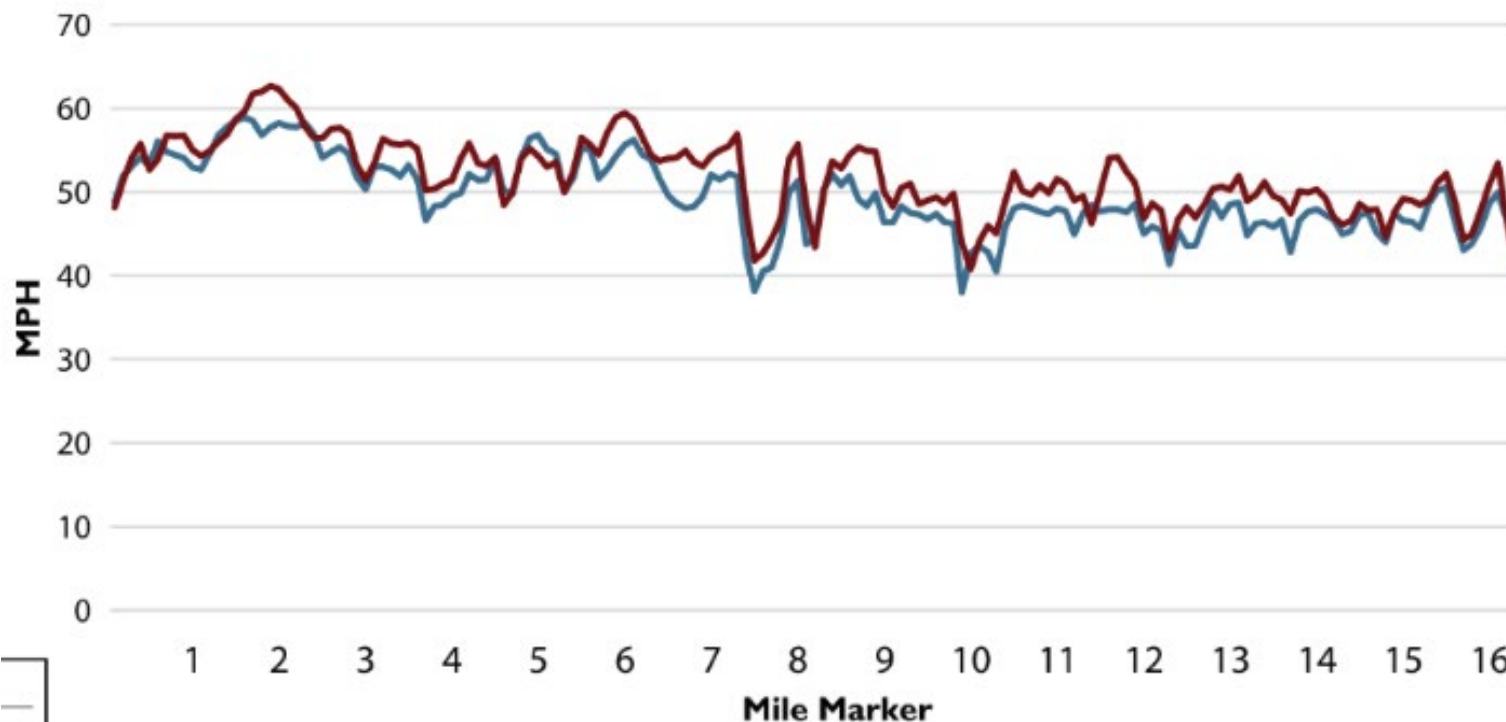
# Speed Data

Speed Data



## NORTHBOUND

	May Avg.	June Avg.
MPH	49.1	51.4
Time (mins)	19:52	19:01



**LEGEND**

- May Average
- June Average

Age  
Age

| May Avg. | June Avg.

# Crash History (2020-2024)

**Reported weighted crash rate: 9.07 crashes per MVMT**  
**Statewide average for similar facilities: 1.44 crashes per MVMT**

**77 Reported Crashes**

**1** fatal crash

**46** road departures

**28** involved motorcycles

**31** injury crashes

**21** animal hits

**4** vehicles in the creek

**ADT (2020-2024): 480**



# Crash Data Trends

- **More than 2/3** crashes occurred during **daylight conditions** and when the roads were **dry**.
- **Almost 1/3** crashes listed **turning or lane changing** as a contributing factor.
- Crashes increase in frequency in the summer months with **55% of crashes occurring June – September**.
- While the statewide average weighted crash rate is decreasing, the **rate of crashes on this roadway is increasing**.

# Data-Backed Design

Increasing Safety & Preserving Natural Characteristics

U.S. Highway 14A Curve Reconstruction (2019-2020)

**Before Construction  
2014-2018**

13 crashes (1 fatal, 4 injury, 8 PDO)  
2.6 crashes per year

**After Construction  
2021-2024**

2 crashes (1 injury, 1 PDO)  
0.5 crashes per year





# Highway 14A Curve Reconstruction



Before Construction



After Construction



# Design

*Preliminary Design Plans*



# 2023 Public Meeting: What We Heard

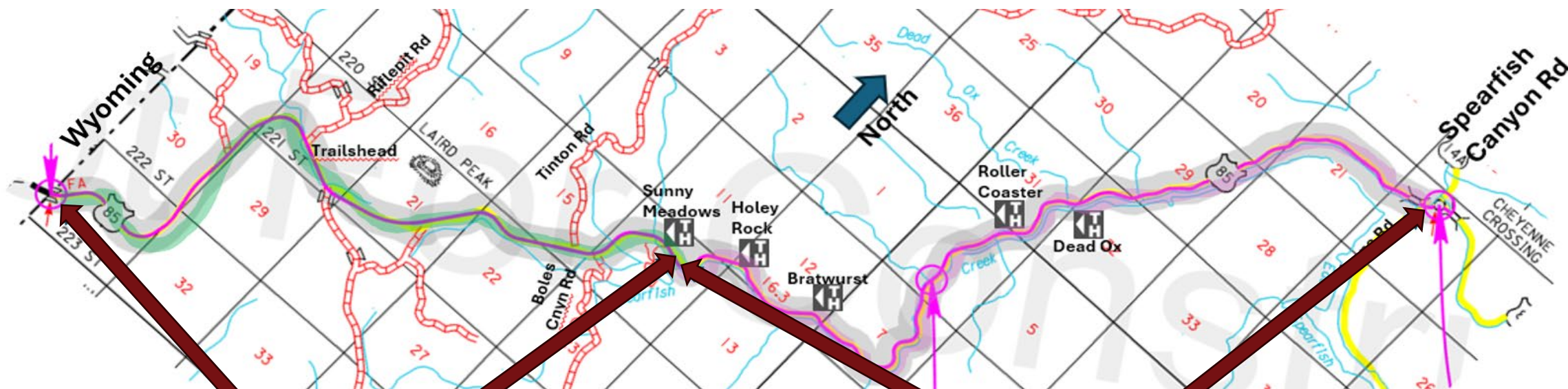




# Design Goals

- Replace the driving surface
- Add shoulders – improves chance of staying on the highway
- Improve Clear Zone
  - Get vehicles back onto highway
  - Keep vehicles upright
  - Remove fixed objects
- Still challenges ahead
  - Minimize creek and slope impacts on northeast end of project
  - Hydraulic analysis on northeast end of project
  - ROW acquisition

# Design Speed & Clear Zone



From Wyoming border to Sunny Meadows Trailhead  
55 mph design speed  
30' clear zone

From Sunny Meadows Trailhead to Cheyenne Crossing  
40 mph design speed (*speed limit TBD*)  
5-10' clear zone

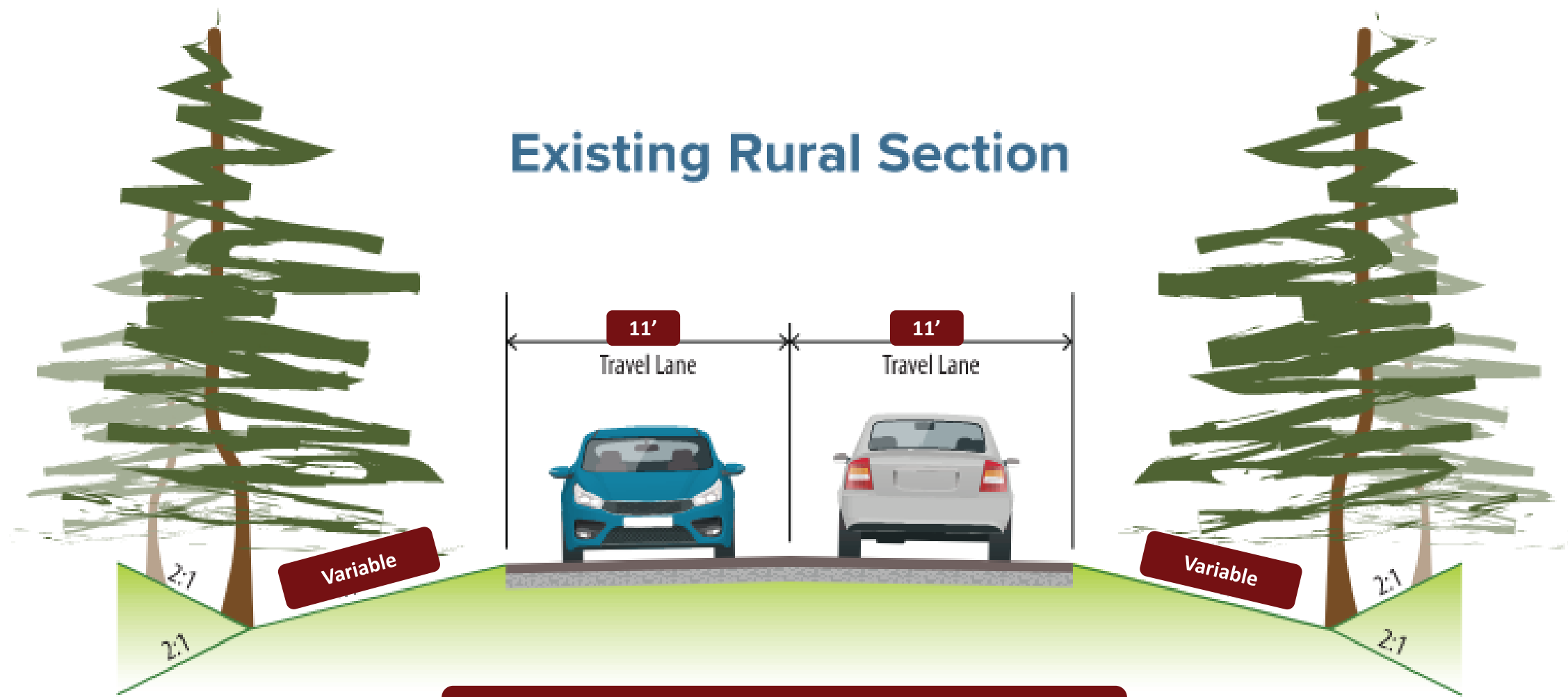


# Other Design Changes (from 2023 meeting)





# Existing Rural Section



## U.S. Highway 85 Typical Section

\*Clear zone is the width needed for a vehicle to recover once it has left the roadway





# Design Challenges Near Spearfish Creek

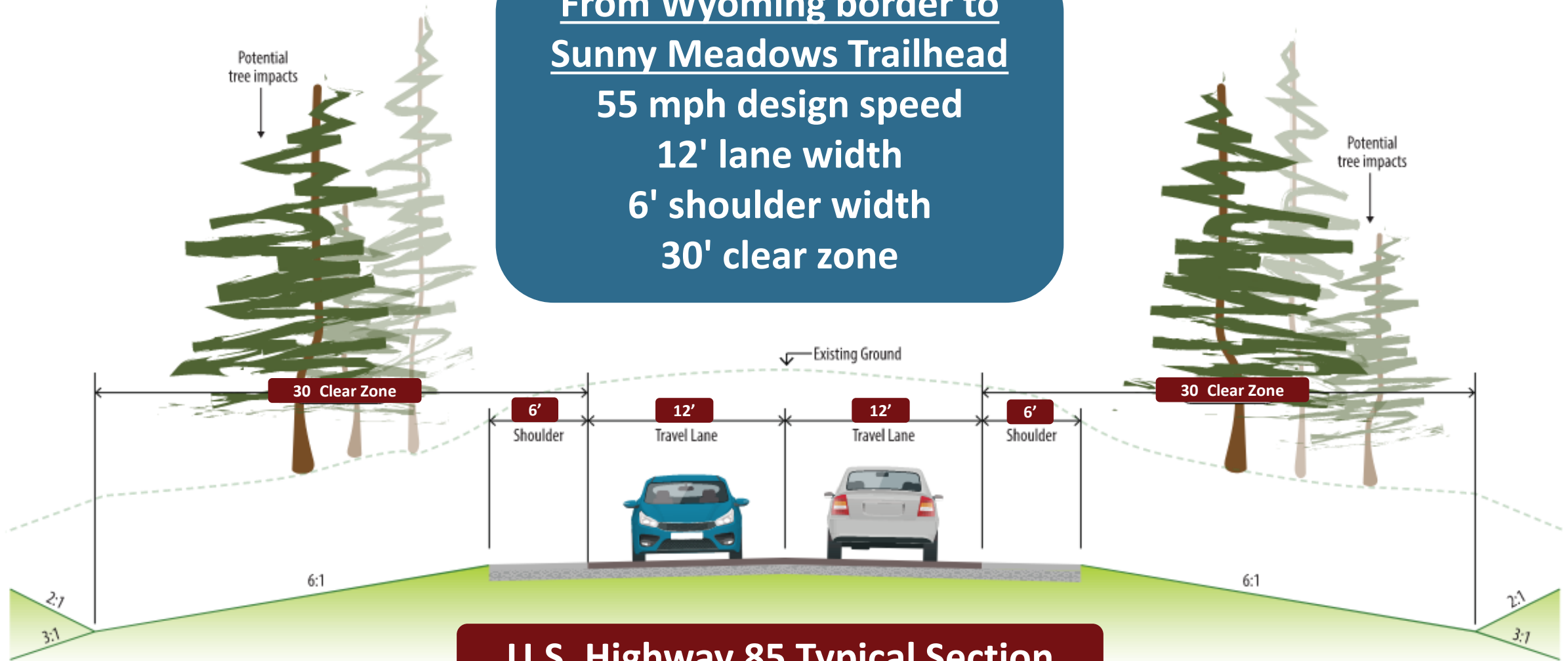
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**From Wyoming border to  
Sunny Meadows Trailhead**

**55 mph design speed  
12' lane width  
6' shoulder width  
30' clear zone**



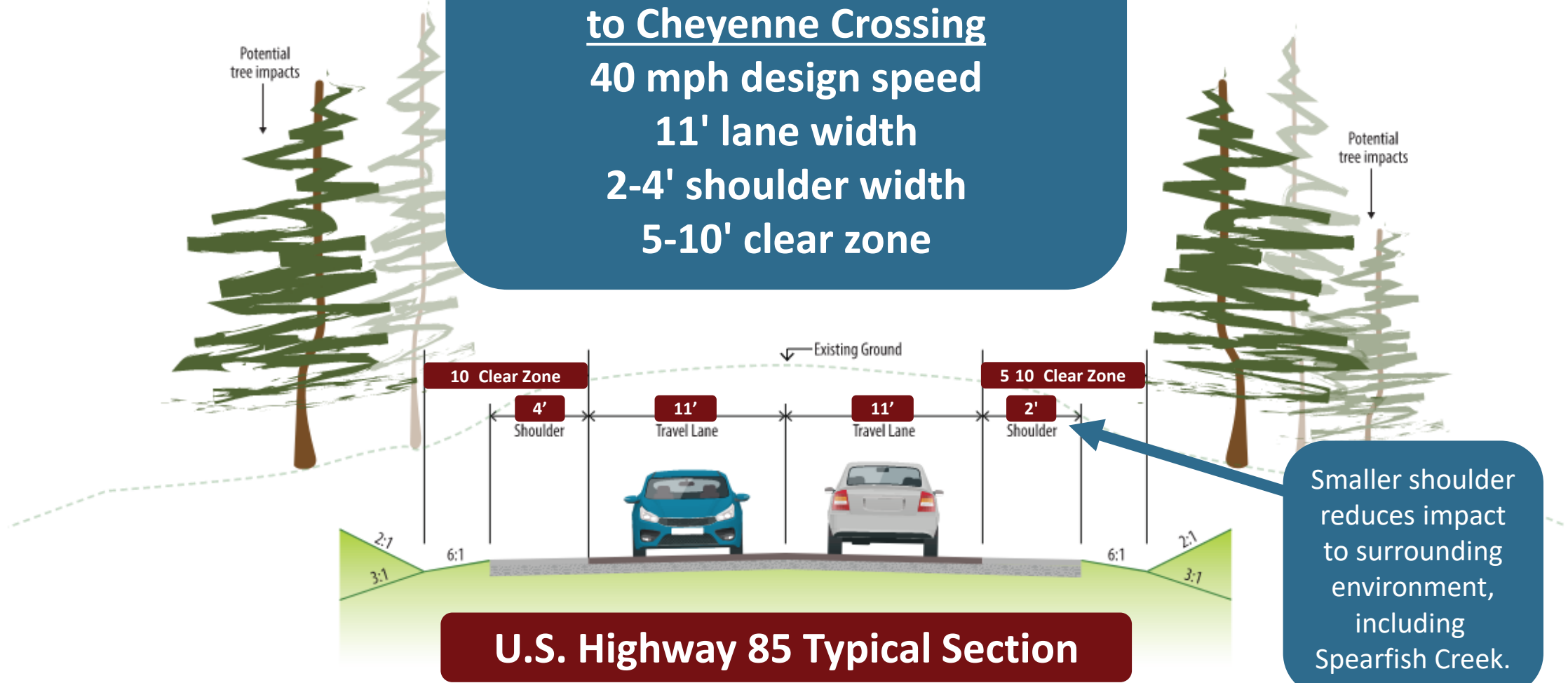
**U.S. Highway 85 Typical Section**

\*Clear zone is the width needed for a vehicle to recover once it has left the roadway

150' ROW



**From Sunny Meadows Trailhead  
to Cheyenne Crossing**  
 40 mph design speed  
 11' lane width  
 2-4' shoulder width  
 5-10' clear zone



**U.S. Highway 85 Typical Section**

\*Clear zone is the width needed for a vehicle to recover once it has left the roadway

150' ROW



# Design Investigations

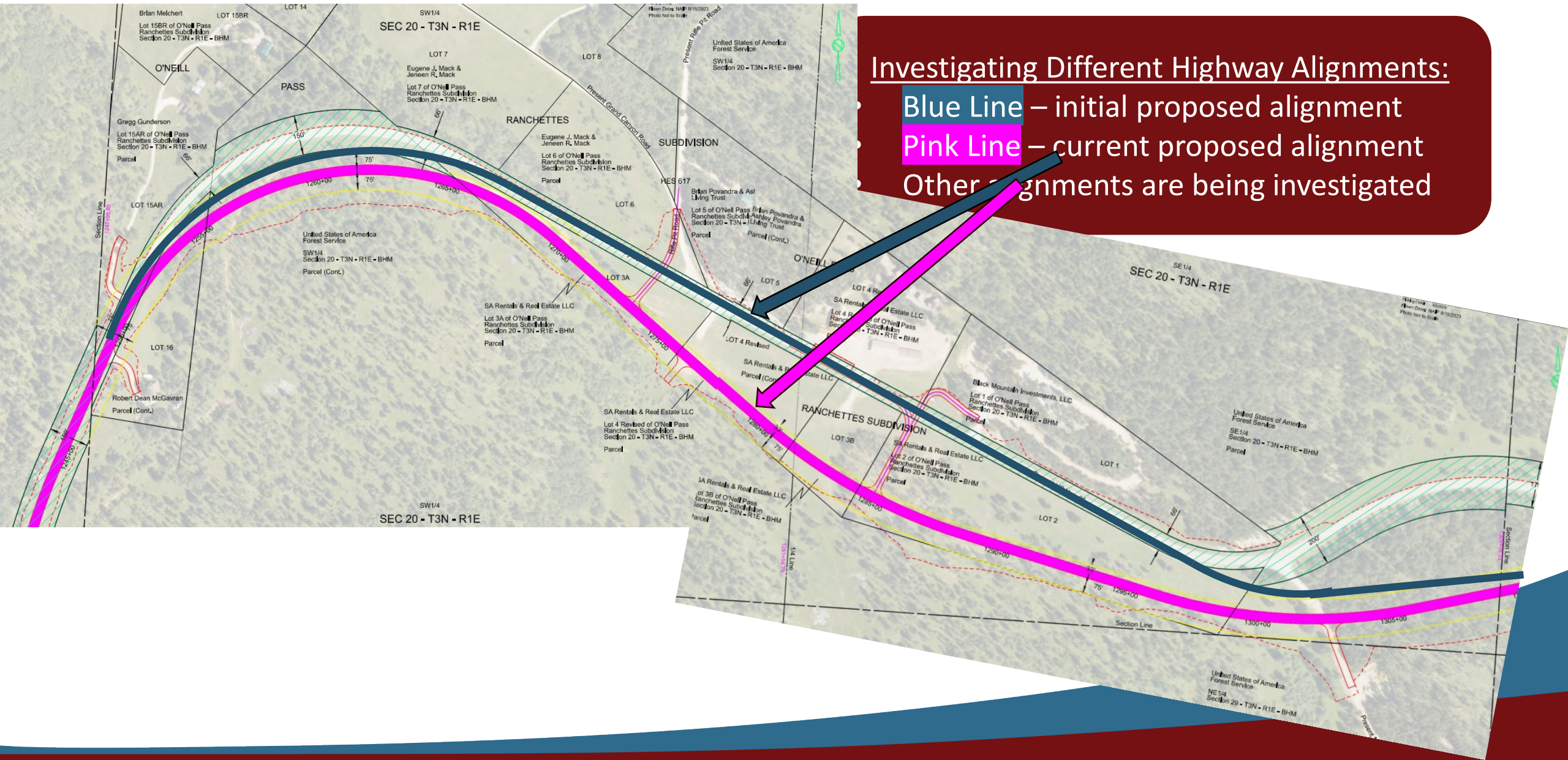
# Trailhead Lodge Area

Investigating Different Highway Alignments:

**Blue Line** – initial proposed alignment

**Pink Line** – current proposed alignment

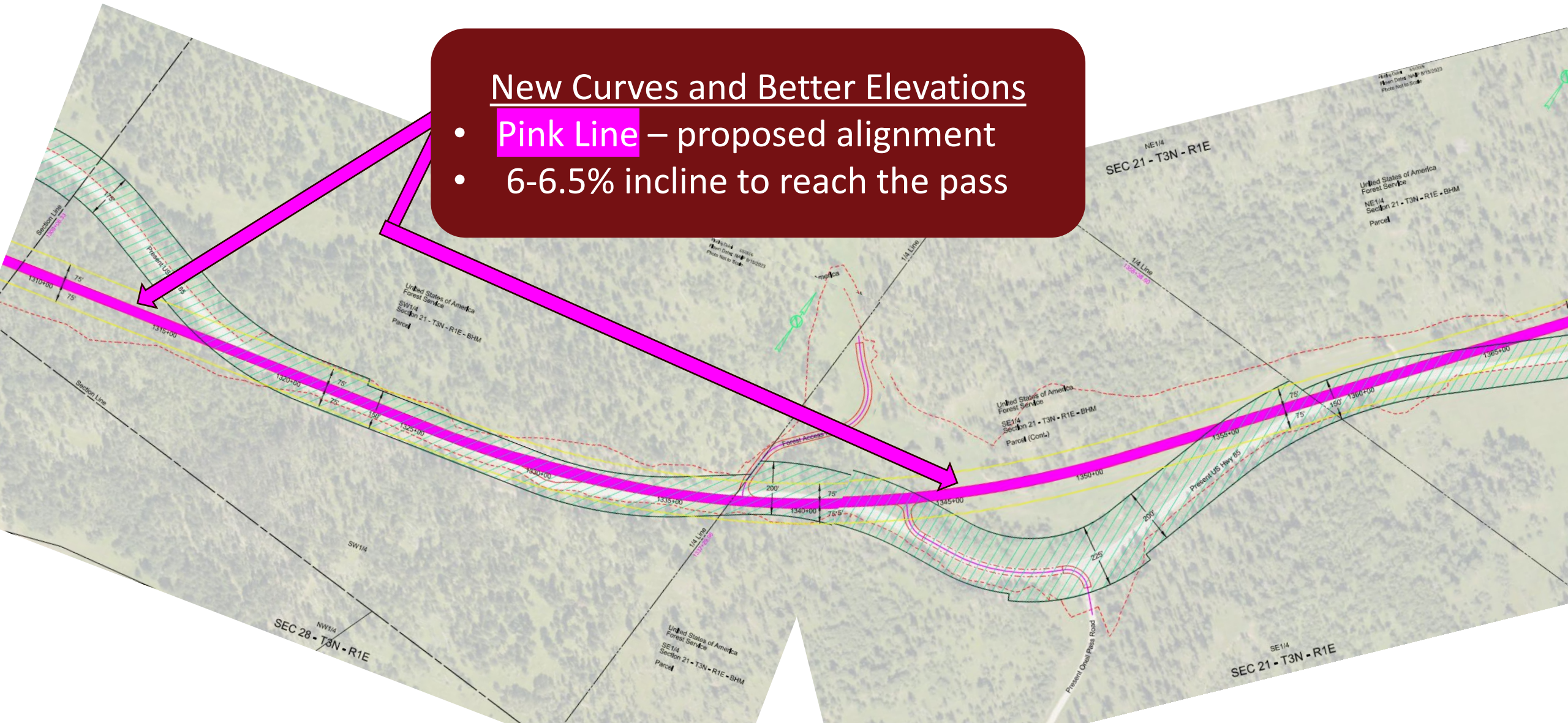
Other alignments are being investigated



# O'Neil Pass

## New Curves and Better Elevations

- **Pink Line** – proposed alignment
- 6-6.5% incline to reach the pass



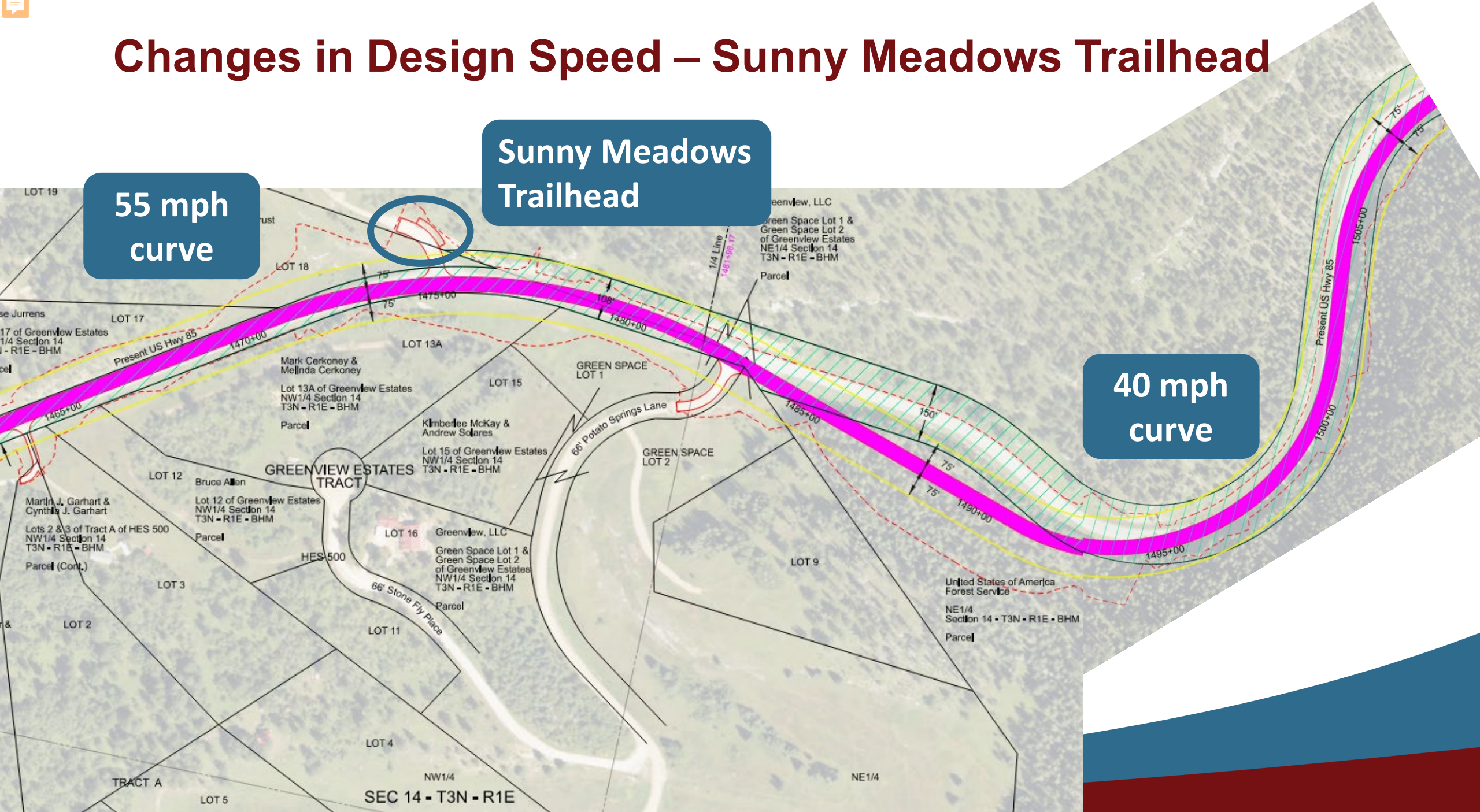
# Changes in Design Speed – Sunny Meadows Trailhead



55 mph curve

Sunny Meadows Trailhead

40 mph curve





**Environmental**

# Environmental, Social, and Economic Concerns

**This project is being developed in accordance with applicable State and Federal environmental regulations.**

- **National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended.**
- **Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act**

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires Federal actions to take into account the effects of project undertakings on historic properties. The public is invited to provide information on any known historic properties (archaeological sites, historic buildings, historic bridges, etc.).

# Environmental, Social, and Economic Concerns

- **Section 404 of the Clean Water Act**

Federal regulations require that unavoidable wetland impacts caused by highway construction be avoided, minimized, or mitigated. If you are interested in creating or restoring wetlands on your property, please complete the Wetland Mitigation Registry Form in the handouts.

- **Section 4(f) of the USDOT Transportation Act of 1966**

Project development will include all possible planning to avoid and minimize harm to publicly owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife & waterfowl refuges, and historical sites. The public is invited to review and comment on the possible effects the project may have on the activities, features, and attributes to: Eagle Cliff/Holey Rock Trailhead, Bratwurst Trailhead, Snowmobile Trails, the Hardy Ranger Station buildings, Summer Cabin near Dead Ox Creek, McLaughlin T&T Railroad, Little Rapid Ditch, and Kykendall Flume



# Environmental, Social, and Economic Concerns

- **Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act**

The project will be coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine effects to the following species that are known to occur in Lawrence County:

- Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*)
- Tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*)
- Red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*)
- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*)
- Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee (*Bombus suckleyi*)

Efforts are proceeding to ensure this undertaking will not adversely affect listed species in Lawrence County.

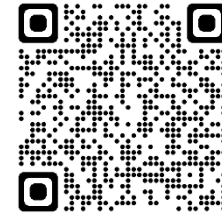
# Questions or Comments

by: **Friday, June 19, 2026**

Submit to:

Mark Malone  
SD DOT

700 E Broadway Ave., Pierre, SD 57501  
Mark.Malone@state.sd.us



Website:

<https://dot.sd.gov/ushighway85tow>



**THANK YOU!**